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THE CHASE.

The cry "who will show us any good," is universal. The ways in which happiness is sought are endless; but the experience of every age attests that it is not to be realized in the pursuit or possession of the things of time and sense. The votary of pleasure who has passed through every circle of fashion, amusement, and folly, hunts after new delights with a scent as keen as though he had never followed the chase before. Thus is it with all worldly good. Vanity and vexation of spirit are written upon every thing below the skies. Happiness is fled from the world: earth cries out it is not in me; and the rolling deep responds it is not in me.

Are men then doomed to disappointment? Must they all and always pursue the phantom without any hope of ever meeting with the reality? Has happiness in her flight left no trace of her footsteps? We reply, happiness may be found, appropiated, and enjoyed, but only in the light of God's countenance, in the knowledge of his Son Jesus Christ, in a realizing sense of gospel good.

Just look carefully at this important subject. How affecting the *scene!* "Many," that is, multitudes standing amidst goodly prospects, surrounded with all that is desirable, and yet unable to enjoy the full banquet, because they have no eye to discern, and no taste to realize the bounty. How affecting the *thought!* Many, that is, multitudes pursuing one object in every diversity of path; of industry and indolence, of virtue and vice, of knowledge and ignorance, some fetching the compass of earth and sea, others like the bee, sipping of every cup of sweets; and yet all turning from the favourite pursuit with disappointment or disgust. How affecting the *fact!* many, that is, multitudes following their deluded predecessors in the ransack of earth and the rummage of nature; through every walk and in

every nook, still confessing that all is unsatisfying and delusive. Thus the Psalmist, like a wise observer, beheld the painful scene without surprise, because he saw the multitude turn away from the real source, and refuse the proper means whereby their professed desire could be realized. Happiness was not distant nor inaccessible; but they either overlooked or despised it; would not come to the fountain where it bubbles up in all its freshness, but repaired to muddy streams and stagnant lakes, and empoisoned springs: refused to approach the tree of life, but greedily plucked the apples of Sodom, which, however tempting to the eye, prove only rottenness to the taste.

The cry, "who will show us any good," expresses "want;" it is an insatiate craving. Many want, not necessary things, not comforts, not luxuries, not the world's possessions, interests, honours: not friends or friendship; not intellect, health, or opportunities of enjoyment—these are all at command; the world has bestowed every favour but one, given all things but one, crowned every wish but one, and that is the power of being happy. They know not why it is, but they know that thus it is, all their joys are short-lived, and succeeded by regrets, remorse, and fears.

This cry also intimates "sorrow;" for there are not only wants which the world cannot supply, but there are also wounds which the world cannot heal, and griefs which the world cannot assuage. With these we meet every day, in every walk. We meet them in the vale of poverty, and in the field of plenty—we see them in the house of mourning, and in the circles of festivity—we pass them on the desert of calamity, and in the regions of prosperity. The plaintive tone continually accosts us—Who will show us any good? something new to alleviate, divert, or give a momentary ease to an aching head, a troubled breast, a disquieted heart.

And this cry implies, "indifference;" for whilst it proceeds from many, all obviously do not unite in it. There are some who seem to have attained the rich man's wish, to be at ease, with whom all things

glide smoothly; and who, like the eagle in her rock-crested nest, are quiet from the fear of evil. They are asleep in carnal security—the conscience is lulled—thundering providences alarm not; the peals of the law terrify not; gospel calls allure not; but basking in the sun, or bathing in the stream, they take it for granted, that to-morrow shall be as this day and more abundant, utterly unsuspecting that the time of trouble will come, when the awful words *Proverbs* i. 28. &c., will so ring as to make both their ears to tingle.

Surely then we may enquire of all who put forth this cry, Who has shown you any good hitherto? You have had much promised, you have left little untried, and yet your craving continues. All has been a round of vanity—all has ended with keen disappointment. Is it not then time to try another mode—to enquire for another object? Why go wandering in vexation, when you are directed to real bliss? to a source which has never failed—to a friend who has never refused? And you cannot come too many in number, nor too deep in distress. Here are stores suited for you, open to all, enough for each. Will you then turn to earth, which will only deceive and ruin? Why not come to Calvary for pardon, to Sion for comfort, to true religion for bliss?

The world has nothing left to give.
It has no new, no pure delight:
O try the life which Christians live,
You would be *blest*, why not to-night?

Or may we listen to this cry as proceeding from a broken heart, a contrite spirit, a weeping penitent: who has tried the world and good is not there: who has tried obedience to the law, but good is not there: who has tried personal virtue, but good is not there: who turns from the world disgusted, for it has deceived him: who turns from the law alarmed, for it has denounced him: who turns from virtue disappointed, for it has failed him: and who in bitterness of spirit says, "Who will show me any good?" We direct him to the only source of relief, but the certain supply of bliss pure, full, lasting.

Turn to the sunshine of the Divine presence, the witness of the blessed Spirit, the token of the Saviour's love, the consolations of scripture truth; for with these, and with nothing less than these will the soul be satisfied. This will wean the heart from earth, transform it into the divine image, make the soul a sacrifice, the life an altar, and fit the whole being for life, death, and endless glory.

Sinners, will you scorn the message,
Sent in mercy from above?
Every sentence, O how tender,
Every line is full of love:
Listen to it,
Every line is full of love.

Yes, there are many who have found it so. Multitudes in heaven have fully proved that religion "is not a vain thing," but the only source of real happiness, and endless bliss. Numbers on earth are realizing the truth, that "godliness is profitable to all things;" it gives a welcome to all events, and a settled assurance that all shall issue right. They can truly say respecting happiness, "*we* have found it." And each one rejoices in this testimony—

Now rest my long divided heart,
Fixed on this blissful centre rest;
With ashes who would grudge to part,
When called on angel's bread to feast.

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